

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES**

**TO:** Interested Parties

**FROM:** Patricia Martinez  
Director  
Department of Children, Youth and Families

**DATE:** August 16, 2006

**SUBJECT:** Mental Health Emergency Service Interventions for Children,  
Youth and Families – Regulations for Certification

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I am forwarding for your information DCYF Mental Health Emergency Service Interventions for Children, Youth and Families – Regulations for Certification, effective September 18, 2006. This rule was advertised for promulgation in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act (Title 42, Chapter 35 of the Rhode Island General Laws) and a Public Hearing was held on Tuesday, April 25, 2006. This rule establishes the licensing provisions for agencies seeking to deliver child-family competent emergency service interventions.

In response to public comments, the Department made the following revisions to its original proposal. Listed below are the issues of concern and the Department's response.

**Issue:** Staffing Requirements - Questions were raised about the limited availability of child-trained professionals in the Rhode Island workforce.

**Response:** The Department has modified its proposed rule by modifying the requirement for a child psychiatrist to be available to each team around the clock. By examining the current volume of clients, we noted that there is less volume during nights and weekends. For those times, the final rule requires that a psychiatrist with child-adolescent experience and emergency services experience be on call. During weekdays from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., a child-trained psychiatrist must be available to the emergency service provider.

**Issue:** Staff Training Requirements – We received feedback that narrowing the topics for in-service training may limit providers from future topics that emerge from research and promising practices that are yet to be explored.

**Response:** While we believe that it is important for emergency services clinicians to stay current on topics of interest in Children's Behavioral Health, we encourage providers to develop their own expertise in children's behavioral health and we agree that if DCYF is too prescriptive, we may hinder program initiative. Therefore, we have eliminated in the final regulations many of the specific requirements for agencies that were included in the proposed rule.

**Issue:** Membership on the Emergency Services Advisory Committee – It was requested that the Director of the Office of the Mental Health Advocate participate on the Emergency Services Advisory Committee.

**Response:** We agree and welcome the Mental Health Advocate's expertise in interpreting and applying mental health law.

**Issue:** Cultural and Linguistic Competency

**Response:** In response to recommendations from the National Center for Cultural Competency at Georgetown University, we included in the final rule a definition of Cultural Competency. We added linguistic competency as a component of cultural competency and provided further definition of cultural competency as it applies to provider skills, knowledge and familiarity with community resources.

We are confident that these regulations will improve the capacity of the state to respond to psychiatric emergencies in a fashion that matches the services to the needs of the children and the families.

This rule is accessible on our website <http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/> and through the Secretary of State's Rules and Regulations Search Interface <http://www.rules.state.ri.us/rules/>. Additionally, please note that providers who are interested in applying for certification may access the application and instructions on the DCYF website.

If you have any questions or concerns relating to this distribution, please contact Janet Anderson, Ed.D., DCYF Assistant Director for Community Services and Behavioral Health by phone (528-3797) or e-mail ([Janet.Anderson@dcyf.ri.gov](mailto:Janet.Anderson@dcyf.ri.gov)).

Thank you for your attention to this matter.